

► **FREE**

Kurdistan

Issue #98

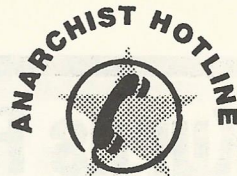
April 23-May 6, '91

Toronto's Anarchist Bi-Weekly Ecomedia

BULLETIN

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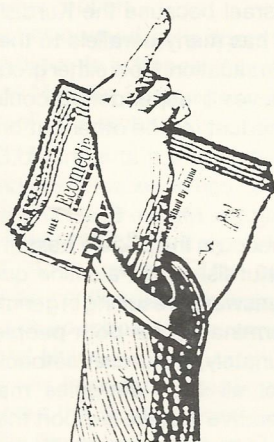


535-5731

EVENTS LISTING
FOR ACTIVISTS

Monarchy Malarkey

**(L)oath(e)
of
Allegiance**



Metro cops may be debating whether to swear allegiance to the Queen but we've got no problem giving the rich windbag our salute! The only queens we really like are the kind you'll find at the Queer Culture festival (which wraps up April 28—call 863-9455 for info).

FREE KURDISTAN!

Riot cops were powerless to stop angry Kurds from attacking the Iraqi embassy in Ottawa with molotovs and bricks on April 8. Fifteen people were eventually arrested. The demonstrators were demanding an end to the slaughter of Kurds by the Iraqi army, a practice which dates back many decades, but which took an explicitly genocidal form when the Iraqi army recaptured towns in

Kurdistan that Kurds had reclaimed shortly after the ceasefire in the Gulf war.

Thousands of Kurds have been forced to flee Iraq into Turkey which closed off its borders fearing a large Kurdish refugee population. The U.S., after urging people within Iraq to rise up and then giving the Iraqi army blanket approval to bloodily suppress

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US Betrays Kurds

While Iraq Continues

Slaughter

Dhoruba bin-Wahad Speaks in Support of ROM Eleven

ROM 11 Trial Date Changed

The ROM Eleven, a group of African activists arrested during demonstrations opposing the Royal (Racist) Ontario Museum last spring, have had their trial adjourned until November.

The Eleven were to face trial on a series of charges from assault police to resisting arrest, based on an incident where Metro's "finest" attacked the weekly demonstrations countering the racist "Into the Heart of Africa" exhibit at the ROM. The exhibit portrayed African people through the eyes

of white missionaries and degraded their culture; the exhibit has been compared to mounting an exhibit of Jews in Germany through the eyes of the Nazis.

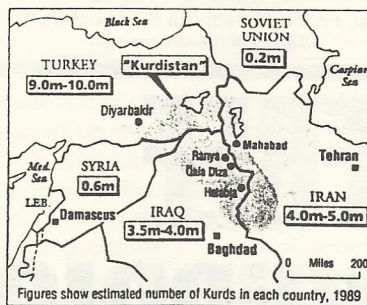
The trial was to span three days beginning April 24 but has been expanded to nine days to accommodate more police 'testimony' (sic) and moved to November 18.

Dhoruba Bin-Wahad, former Black Panther and political prisoner for 19 years, spoke in support of the ROM

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Kurds Fight US And Iraqi Betrayal

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the insurrections, (as well as leaving Iraq's elite troops the Republican Guard intact, to do the job) is yet again using Kurds to effectuate its agenda for the Middle East. This time around, Kurds are being used to justify a permanent US or UN presence in Iraq. Many Kurds feel that their fate was sealed when US army officials met with Iraqi army officials to finalize terms of the ceasefire, telling them that the US would not prevent the Iraqi regime from maintaining its power through whatever means it chose.

To understand what is happening in Kurdistan today we have to go back to the 17th century when Kurdistan was divided in two by the Ottoman Empire and Persia. Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after WW1, the Treaty of Lausanne, signed in 1923 between Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Greece and Turkey, carved up Kurdistan and divided it amongst Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Kurds are the largest mass of people with no state of their own and not recognized as a nation by the UN and governments.

Since Kurdistan's partition, Kurds struggling to maintain national rights, such as language (four major Kurdish dialects are spoken) and culture, have faced perpetual persecution. In Turkey, Syria, and Iran, Kurds are forbidden to speak their indigenous language and speaking of Kurdistan as a national entity is punishable by imprisonment. Iraq is the only country which recognizes Kurds as a distinct ethnic group.

The repression visited upon Kurds has taken a variety of brutal forms. By 1990, over 1500 Kurdish villages had been destroyed, their inhabitants forced to evacuate and often deported to regions within the oppressor nations

where a process of assimilation is begun. An estimated 700 000 Kurds in Iraqi-Kurdistan were killed by poison gas attacks in the late eighties. All of this to prevent Kurds from achieving an independent and unified Kurdistan.

Resistance to the above policies spans many generations, has taken the form of a variety of tactics and has been undertaken by a multitude of groups whose make-ups range from socialist, to nationalist, to capitalist. It is the latter element which received arms and training from the C.I.A. and Israel in 1974. Mulla Mustafa Barzani and the rebels he commanded received this aid, not because the US or Israel wanted to see a Kurdish victory in Iraq, but to ensure that Iraq was in a state of perpetual destabilisation. This aid was pulled back in 1975 and has not since been re-instated to any tendencies within the Kurdish movement.

It is crucial to understand that the US does not want to see a Kurdish victory in any part of Kurdistan. This is because a Kurdish victory in Iraqi-Kurdistan could help Kurdish rebels in Turkish-Kurdistan, Turkey being a NATO member and US ally who protects US interests in the region. Kurdish insurgents in Turkey have waged a

successful armed struggle campaign spearheaded by the PKK-the Workers Party of Kurdistan, since 1984. In March of 1990, close to the Kurdish holiday of Newroz, a Kurdish intifada broke out in Turkey when mourners attending the funeral of slain PKK guerrillas were attacked by Turkish troops. The links made by the PKK to the mass popular uprising has instilled fear in Turkish authorities to the point that the Turkish officials ordered the Turkish airforce to strafe Kurdish villages in Turkey-Kurdistan under cover of the Gulf war.

A Kurdish victory is also not desired by Israel because the Kurdish situation has many parallels to the Palestinian situation. How either group finally achieves independence could set a precedent for the other but one thing is certain and that is that U.S. intervention can never solve the problems facing the Middle East. There will be no peace in the Middle East until both the Kurdish and Palestine questions are answered resulting in genuine self-determination for both peoples. Unfortunately, a Kurdish setback could affect all such struggles making it imperative that we support the Kurds now in their struggle for liberation.



Soviet Jews Used As Israeli Pawns

The breakdown of the Soviet Republic has brought a relaxation of the country's emigration policy, lifting restrictions off Soviet Jews. However Soviet people can't leave until they gain acceptance into another country. Most Soviet Jews would like to emigrate to the United States or Western Europe, but countries like the U.S. who at one time pressured the Soviet Union to allow Jewish emigration are now refusing large numbers of immigrants claiming they do not have refugee status. Many Soviet Jews see Israel as an option.

Israel has opened up its doors to the new immigrants in hopes of building, as Prime Minister Shamir describes a 'Big Israel'. The ambition is to create a definitively Jewish state, with a population that overwhelms the Palestinian presence. More and more Soviet Jews are realizing they are being pushed into the centre of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and now many are refusing to go, choosing to remain in the Soviet Union.

Israel has imposed censorship on news about the Soviet immigrants to downplay the negative publicity. The immigrants that do arrive in the country are placed under restrictions that do not allow them to leave the country.

The Israeli government has offered attractive benefits to counter these tough measures like interest-free mortgages, free health insurance, etc. The majority of Soviet immigrants, 200,000 in 1990 alone, are being settled in East Jerusalem. This territory, which was Palestinian land prior to the 1967 war, is not recognized by Israel as an occupied territory. The result of

this flood of immigration is a massive housing shortage in East Jerusalem, which has increased racial tension. The Eastern part of the city is home to 140,000 Palestinians. The result of the overcrowding has caused increased competition for housing and jobs. The new immigrants are finding conditions in East Jerusalem so unbearable they are eventually moving to the West Bank.

The Israeli government has promised not to directly settle new immigrants in the occupied territories. But Soviet immigrants who have gained citizenship (which amazingly only takes one year) may settle anywhere in the

country. Many are now being forced to choose the occupied territories. The Soviet immigrants are effectively being used as pawns in a political game. The Israeli government is achieving its goal of a larger Jewish state with the resettlement of the occupied territories at the expense of the new immigrants, who are being forced into a situation of homelessness and violence. In essence the Israeli government is exploiting Soviet Jews for its own political ends.

(reprinted from Community Charge, Hamilton's Autonomous Voice, issue 5)

Green Giant Steps On Workers

The Green Giant and the Pillsbury Dough Boys make a mean team! After a buyout by Grand Metropolitan, Pillsbury-Green Giant is putting 400 people out of work in Watsonville, California. Although the plant, which helped make the Green Giant rich on frozen foods, was profitable, it's being moved to Irapuato, Mexico where wages will be only \$4.00 a day. The move is being traced to Grand Metropolitan's need to pay off the high costs of its buyout.

Workers at the plant documented some of the conditions in Mexico: the broccoli and cauliflower will be grown exclusively for export on land that used to produce corn and beans for domestic consumption. Also, the unregulated use of pesticides, lack of environmental controls and common

use of contaminated water will pose health hazards for workers and consumers alike.

Though the free trade deal may mean more jobs for Mexican workers, it brings with it further human and environmental exploitation and misuse of land resources. A picket of the Watsonville plant by the Teamsters has little effect. What might make the Green Giant meet his David is if workers worldwide boycotted another Grand Metropolitan subsidiary, Burger King, or refused to handle its products, something mere trade unionism can't put into practice. Maybe the One Big Union wasn't such a bad idea?

(sources: Watsonville workers, the Nation Magazine, Libertarian Labour Review)

Trudeau's Grand Strategy

Physical evidence of Canadian government counter-insurgency plans came to light on April 11, in the form of a strategic paper created only days after the War Measures Act was invoked, in 1970 by then Canadian prime minister Trudeau to deal with the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ). The paper, obtained through the Access to Information Act, called for portraying the FLQ as blood thirsty perverts and terrorists whose vision of society was a uniform totalitarian one where individuals lost all freedom of thought and action. More significantly, the "grand strategy" was to portray Quebec as a place and people to avoid because of the FLQ and that "the physical and mental energy of Canadians should be mobilized toward Canadian unity."

A perusal of the FLQ manifesto shows that they were neither bloodthirsty or terrorists but were one expression of the liberation movement which represented a real threat to the Canadian state. Trudeau's plan was designed to eradicate the FLQ's base of support by criminalizing not only the FLQ, but all who sympathized with their aims.

The last twenty years has seen little change in the Canadian state's strategy, for the same strategy was implemented when police attacked the Coalition For The Truth About Africa's demonstrations against the ROM's racist Into the Heart of Africa exhibit and during the Oka standoff.

ROM 11 Trial Date

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Eleven last Friday in Toronto. His talk focused on the need to make a personal commitment to revolutionary struggle, principles and cultures, and to build principled movements capable of challenging European settler states like Canada and defending those, like the ROM Eleven, who are persecuted for their stand against those states. He also challenged the sexist ideas and practices of many radical men, describing his battles with his own sexism. Of particular note for Canadian people, facing the rollback of most gains made in the last half century, is his description of how the Vietnamese won their war against the biggest military machine ever (the USA), because, as Dhoruba put it, "They didn't know they were supposed to lose". He added that "We don't realize we're supposed to win."

Ecomedia Toronto

Ecomedia is an international "wire service" that acts as an alternative to regular news services. We focus on news and often censored information on autonomous and anarchist resistance and analysis of current events.

Ecomedia Toronto is a local office involved in three main projects: a radio show every Wednesday on CKLN 88.1 FM between 7 and 8 pm on the "Word of Mouth" program; also another radio spot, *Upper-cut*, now at 12:30 to 1 pm Tuesdays on CIUT 89.5 FM; and the bulletin in your hands, published bi-weekly and free at locations around the city. Subscriptions are \$18/yr (26 issues) mailed monthly to cut costs. Order from the address on the front. Make cheques or M.O.'s payable to Ecomedia.

Events Benefits Festivals Goings On

Thursday April 25: Benefit for Earth First!, featuring Chicken Milk, Random Order and Rebecca Barcley, at the Apocalypse Club, 750 College St. \$5 or PWYC.

Monday April 29: Mayworks 6th annual festival of working people and the arts, till May 12. For more info. call, 440-1652.

Wednesday May 1: May Day is International Workers Day; a day of mourning and protest in memory of yesterday's battles and a contribution to present and future struggles. Take the day off and celebrate May Day, you deserve it.

Saturday May 4: Irish Freedom Association presents an evening of Irish culture, a commemoration of the tenth Anniversary of Bobby Sands' death, at Paddy's Place 1927 Eglinton Ave. W., 8pm, \$7.

For more events or actions, HANDS (Helping Activists Network During Strife) do very regular and thorough listings, call them at 508-0744.

Anarchist Hotline

For information on upcoming events of interest to the anarchist or activist community, or if you know of an event the community should know about, call the anarchist hotline, 535-5731.